



# PUBLIC HEALTH BYTES

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Henrico Health Department's Newsletter

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with the citizens of  
Henrico County to create  
the conditions for health.



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## Communicable Diseases

**Henrico Roundup: Pertussis**-The past month continued to see pertussis cases reported to all metro Richmond Health Departments. As a reminder, serologic testing is not recommended for diagnosis of pertussis; pertussis test kits are available through the health department. **Shigellosis** - Henrico Health District has received reports of 26 confirmed and 8 probable cases of shigellosis in 2008 (compared with 4 confirmed cases in 2007). Twenty-five cases have been reported in the last quarter of 2008, with a majority in children under age 10. **We encourage providers to obtain stool cultures from patients presenting with GI symptoms suggestive of shigellosis.** In examining our antibiotic sensitivity data for 2008, many organisms were resistant to ampicillin and trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole (TMP-SMX). All organisms have been sensitive to ciprofloxacin (see antibiogram below).

Organism	% of isolates	Ampicillin		TMP-SMX		Ciprofloxacin		Levofloxacin	
		% Sens	% Res	% Sens	% Res	% Sens	% Res	% Sens	% Res
S. boydii	6	100	0	0	100				
S. flexneri	13	0	100	0	100				
S. sonnei	81	23	77	54	46	100 (54% of isolates tested)	0	100 (8% of isolates tested)	0

Please note that confirmed or suspected shigellosis is reportable to the health department.

**Seasonal Influenza: Surveillance** -Virginia 2008/2009 Influenza Surveillance Activity Level: **LOCAL** (for week ending 12/20/2008). For more information on influenza activity levels throughout the U.S., see <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/>. Neighboring Maryland and Washington, D.C. are reporting **Sporadic** influenza activity, while other surrounding states are still reporting **No Activity**.

**Change in Treatment for 2008-09 Seasonal Influenza:** On 12/19/08, CDC issued a Health Advisory with the interim recommendation that zanamivir or a combination of oseltamivir and rimantadine be used when influenza A (H1N1) virus infection or exposure is expected, rather than oseltamivir alone. Although flu activity is low in the U.S. to date, preliminary data from a limited number of states indicate resistance to the oseltamivir is high in H1N1 virus strains. See: <http://www2a.cdc.gov/HAN/ArchiveSys/ViewMsgV.asp?AlertNum=00279>

## Community Health Improvement

**Saving Babies in Henrico:** Our thanks to Ann Scott from "Community Voice" for personally training 15 lay health advisors (LHA's) from Eastern Henrico. These LHA's are now able to go out into their communities and share important health information in an effort to "help us save the next baby" in Henrico. Of those trained, at least three are planning to hold additional courses to train new LHA's.

## Pandemic Flu - ALERT PHASE WHO: 3; US: 0

**Pandemic/Avian Flu Update: Human Cases** – In the last month, new human H5N1 infections were confirmed in Cambodia (19 year old male), Indonesia (2 and 9 year old females) and Egypt (16 year old female). Of the 391 human H5N1 cases reported by fifteen countries between 2003 and 2008, 247 were fatal (63.2%). **Animal Cases**- Cambodia is reporting its first highly pathogenic avian H5N1 flu strain for 2008, discovered in birds. The last time the country reported H5N1 in animals was 12/2007.

## Emergency Preparedness

**Emergency Preparedness Update: 2008 in Review and a look ahead to 2009** – Our thanks to local emergency planning and response partners for their assistance this past year. In 2008 we tested our ability to respond to pandemic influenza through a table top exercise, conducted a successful pre-deployment of the CHEMPACK in support of NASCAR race weekend, and responded to a variety of real world public health threats, including rabies, tuberculosis, environmental health threats, and inclement weather. We also witnessed significant growth in our Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) program, including expansion into the eastern half of Henrico County. In 2009, our key focus areas will be attaining national certification of our public health emergency response capabilities, enhancing and testing our ability to respond to a large-scale bioterror event, and growing the Henrico MRC from 275 to 1000 members. The next MRC meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 20 at 6pm at the county's Human Services Building.

## Prevention Updates

**Hib Vaccine Update:** In order to evaluate the policy of deferring the 12-15 month Hib vaccine booster dose, CDC uses national H. influenzae surveillance data to monitor rates of invasive Hib. However, incomplete serotype reporting hampers national surveillance (in 2006, for children <5 years, ~ 40% of case reports received by CDC did not have serotype data). Help improve Hib surveillance by encouraging collection of appropriate clinical specimens for laboratory confirmation of suspected H. influenzae and by timely reporting of all cases of invasive H. influenzae disease in children aged <5 years. See: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5746a2.htm>

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